

REMARKS

The Office Action dated May 13, 2003 has been received and carefully studied.

The Examiner maintains the rejection of claims 1, 6-9, 11, and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Nochumson et al., and claims 1, 2, 11, 1, 3-5, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by White. In response to Applicants' previous arguments that neither reference discloses or teaches that the membrane is "adhered" to the interior wall of the housing, the Examiner states that at page 10 of the instant specification, an embodiment is disclosed whereby the membrane can be optionally removed from the housing.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider her position.

Applicants respectfully submit that the passage of the instant specification referred to by the Examiner does not support her position. That passage refers to an embodiment of the present invention where there is no adherence. In that embodiment, the composite structure would be removable as in Nochumson et al. However, that embodiment is not the embodiment that is the subject matter of the instant claims. The instant claims are directed to the embodiment where the structure comprising a plurality of sorptive particles bound to a polymer (claim 1) or comprising adsorptive polymer (claim 11) is adhered to the interior wall of the housing. In such an embodiment, the structure is not removable from the housing in any salvageable way, as in Nochumson et al.

As stated in Applicants' previous response, Nochumson et al. nowhere disclose or suggest such an adherence; the process of Nochumson et al. actually removes the membrane and washes the same. Even in the embodiment of Nochumson et al. where the membrane is not removed, there is no disclosure or suggestion that it is adhered to the interior wall of the housing.


Similarly, White do not disclose or suggest adhering the structure to an interior wall of the housing; White teach instead that the structure is force fit into the housing.

It is noted that the Examiner states that the rejection of claims 2 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over White has been withdrawn, yet the rejection on page 2 of the Office Action still includes these claims. Clarification is requested.

The Examiner maintains the rejection of claims 3, 10 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nochumson et al. in view of Hagen or Hilderbrandt. These claims are believed to be allowable by virtue of their dependence for the reasons articulated above.

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing.

Respectfully submitted,


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